

Early Education Policy Steering Committee Recommendations

Intended long term outcomes include school achievement, an increase in graduation rates, improved social behaviors, stronger families, skilled workforce, more protected communities, and a more competitive economy.

In order to strengthen comprehensive, community-based early education systems that provide education and care opportunities to families with young children and prepare children for successful learning in the formal educational system, the Early Education Policy Steering Committee recommends the following:

- Establish an Office of Early Education within the Wyoming Department of Education with sufficient authority and access across state agencies that serve young children to ensure that the collaboration and coordination described below is effective and results in the intended outcomes.
- The Wyoming Department of Education, Wyoming Department of Family Services, Wyoming Department of Health and the Wyoming Department of Workforce Services identified as the four lead state agencies to work together to define the roles and responsibilities of the Office of Early Education.

To accomplish the intended long term outcomes, the Office of Early Education will:

- Collaborate with state agencies to collectively promote statewide access to quality early education, support programs to train early education professionals, promote alignment of rules, policies, programs, agency responsibilities and funding to employ more efficient working methods for all early education and care programs in Wyoming.
- Collaborate with the state's community colleges and the University of Wyoming to engage them in the work of strengthening early education systems.
- Collaborate with statewide and local nonprofits to support community-based efforts to bring local agencies, school districts, local organizations and early education and care providers together to plan for cohesive and comprehensive service options that ensure

children are supported by their families, their communities, their health care providers and their schools as they prepare to enter school.

- Collaborate with the Wyoming Early Childhood State Advisory Council and other statewide early education groups and councils.
- Collaborate with local preschool - kindergarten liaisons and other community efforts related to kindergarten readiness to assure children and families receive support and guidance as they transition to kindergarten.
- Collaborate with current federal programs (TANF, IDEA, Head Start State Collaboration Office) to strengthen and promote partnerships between state and local governments.

The Office of Early Education will be accountable for the following outcomes in Year One and will report on these outcomes to the Joint Education Committee by December 1, 2015.

1. An Interagency Agreement among the four lead state agencies that defines how each agency will contribute to and support the coordinated efforts to strengthen early education systems at the community level.
2. Statewide deployment of the Wyoming Early Learning Foundations including:
 - Endorsement by the Wyoming State Board of Education and the four lead state agencies
 - A plan for developing broad based dissemination and use of the Wyoming Early Learning Foundations
 - A plan for implementation of professional training at the community level
 - Assessment and progress reporting of the statewide implementation
 - Identification of long term outcomes for the Wyoming Early Learning Foundations
3. Through collaboration and consultation with school districts, local education agencies early education and care programs, and the P20 State Longitudinal Data System, link child outcome and program assessment data to inform policy for continuous improvement efforts.
4. Develop a long-term strategic plan for the Office of Early Education working with the four lead state agencies and program partners.